

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 00968 090941Z
ACTION SS-15

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 MCT-01
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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4808

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS R.)

SUBJECT: SECVISIT: CALL ON PRESIDENT KATZIR

1. THE SECRETARY IS SCHEDULED TO PAY A COURTESY CALL ON PRESIDENT EPHRAIM KATZIR AT 1700 ON FEBRUARY 15. THE FOLLOWING ARE SUGGESTED TOPICS THE SECRETARY MAY WISH TO DISCUSS DURING THE MEETING.

2. KATZIR IS A BIOPHYSICIST WITH AN INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION. BEFORE HIS INVESTITURE ON MAY 24, 1973, KATZIR WAS HEAD OF THE BIOPHYSICS DEPARTMENT OF THE WEIZMAN INSTITUTE AND FROM 1966 TO 1968 HE WAS ALSO CHIEF SCIENTIST IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE. EVEN WHILE PRESIDENT, HE CONTINUES HIS RESEARCH AS A "WORKING" SCIENTIST. IN VIEW OF HIS BACKGROUND, KATZIR MIGHT BE ASKED FOR HIS IDEAS ON THE ROLE OF SCIENCE AND SCIENTISTS IN THIS FAST-CHANGING WORLD. SPECIFICALLY, THE SECRETARY COULD SOLICIT KATZIR'S OPINIONS ON WHETHER ISRAEL'S SCIENCE COULD HELP IN THE SEARCH FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND, ONCE A SETTLEMENT HAS BEEN REACHED, HOW SCIENCE MIGHT BE ENLISTED IN DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND HER BEIGHBORS. KATZIR COULD BE ASKED ABOUT THE FUTURE DIRECTION OF SCIENCE IN ISRAEL AND ITS ROLE IN THE ECONOMY.

3. SINCE ISRAEL LACKS A SINGLE CONSTITUTIONAL DOCUMENT

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FOR ITS BASIC LAWS AND BECAUSE AS A YOUNG STATE THERE IS A DEARTH OF PRECEDENT, SOME UNCERTAINTY REMAINS OVER THE PRESIDENT'S LATITUDE IN THE GOVERNMENT-FORMATION PROCESS. WITH AN EYE ON THE POSSIBLE RESULTS OF THE MAY KNESSET ELECTION, KATZIR MIGHT BE ASKED WHETHER HE HAS ANY DISCRETION IN CHOOSING A PARTY LEADER TO FORM A GOVERNMENT --PARTICULARLY IF HIS FIRST SELECTION IS UNABLE TO ORGANIZE

A COALITION (ASSUMING A COALITION WILL BE NECESSARY).

4. THE PRESIDENT'S BROTHER AHARON KATCHALSKI, A NOTED SCIENTIST IN HIS OWN RIGHT, WAS KILLED IN THE TERRORIST ATTACK AT LOD (BEN GURION) AIRPORT IN MAY 1972. THE SECRETARY MAY WISH TO DISCUSS U.S. EFFORTS TO COMBAT TERRORISM AND ISRAEL'S VIEWS ON THE SUBJECT.
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